

No. 1.—Iniquity and a Meeting.

15

INIQUITY AND A MEETING:

A Discourse, delivered in the Congregational Church, Whitesboro, Lord's Day, January 31, 1841. "He judged the cause of the poor and needy; then it was well with him; was not this to know me, saith the Lord?" By BERIAH GREEN, President of the Oneida Institute.

TO THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, WHITESBORO.

DEAR BRETHREN—When, during the late protracted meeting in this village, I saw you tempted and exposed, especially by some, who in contempt of the principles they had professed to honor, lent their countenance and co-operation to the special church-going and church-increasing activity of a community, which has all along stood aloof from you in your exertions to promote, in the face of derision and reproach, the cause of a sound morality and a pure religion. I felt impelled to lift up the voice of warning. That voice, it is the object of these pages to repeat and prolong. It is high time, that a Christianity, falsely so called, which refuses to come to the rescue of the earthling, the drunkard, the slave, the respecter of persons, the dupe, and the victim of popular prejudice, the votary of the say-and-do-not philanthropy, were understood that it might be abhorred. While such nuisances are endured, we must be exposed to an infected atmosphere. "It is time for thee, Lord, to work; for they have made void thy law." Let us never, dear brethren, forget, that "he who endureth unto the end," alone shall be saved. Yours in the Savior, affectionately,

B. GREEN.

Whitesboro, Feb. 1841.

DISCOURSE.

ISAIAH 1: 10—17. Hear the word of the Lord, ye rulers of Sodom; give ear unto the law of our God, ye people of Gomorrah. To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith the Lord: I am full of the burnt offerings of rams and the fat of fed beasts; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he-goats. When ye come to appear before me, who hath required this at your hand, to tread my courts? Bring no more vain oblations: incense is an abomination unto me; the new moons and sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with: it is iniquity, even the solemn meeting. Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth: they are a trouble unto me; I am weary to bear them. And when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you: yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear: your hands are full of blood. Wash you, make you clean: put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow.

The prophet so describes and so exhorts the religionists, here addressed, as to give us a clue to

their character. They were just fit to be ranked with the men of Sodom. And how they were to be regarded, we may learn of Ezekiel.* "Behold," he exclaims, "this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom; pride, fullness of bread, and abundance of idleness was in her and her daughters, neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy." Idle as they were, inflated with pride, and bloated with luxury: playing the tyrant among the helpless and friendless. That this was the character of the creatures Isaiah had to deal with, the exhortation shows, in which their duty is set forth. If they would put away the evil of their doings, and thus find access to the Mercy-Seat, they must "seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow." The condition and claims of the "poor and needy," they must earnestly study; and take part with the weak against the strong—with the oppressed against the oppressor.

Very different was the position, which these religionists at present held. Their zeal for God was consistent with contempt for man. With them the positive of religion was every thing; the moral, nothing. In meeting-holding, psalm-singing, prayer-making, they were active and noisy enough. In these things they were all stir and smoke. The calling of assemblies, the solemn meetings, the appointed feasts they multiplied even to the wearying of Jehovah. Iniquity and a meeting,† He could not away with. He loathed their services. We are thus taught that a MEETING-HOLDING ACTIVITY UNDER THE PRETENSE OF A REGARD FOR HUMAN SALVATION, ACCOMPANIED BY A DISREGARD FOR HUMAN RIGHTS, IS AN ABOMINATION TO JEHOVAH. For,

I. *It implies rank absurdity and a flagrant contradiction.*—In the constitution of man, the rights of man are involved. The attributes, the powers and capacities here found, are God-given endowments. These gifts imply fearful responsibilities. They are a sacred trust, for which an account must be rendered. All this supposes the right to wield our powers and use our capacities, according to our constitution—freely to hold and freely to pursue the end of our existence. Whatever interferes with us here, injures us vitally. Health, vigor, useful activity are at once impaired. If our right to be what our Creator de-

* Ezekiel xvi. 49.

† "Ich mag nicht Frevel und Geste."—Griesinger.

signed us to be, and to do what he requires us to do, is invaded, wrong and wretchedness must ensue. And this wretchedness must be deep and this wrong flagrant in the same degree as the invasion of such rights is far-reaching, violent and determined. Our salvation, of course, depends upon the full enjoyment of those rights, to which under God we are constitutionally and inalienably entitled. *These can be enjoyed only in the free discharge of those duties which the rights imply.* To employ our powers and capacities in a course of law-abiding activity, without let or hindrance, is the right of all rights, to which, both individually and socially, we are entitled. If we are assailed here, whether by inward passion or outward violence, our salvation is put to hazard. If the assault be successful, our very hearts are stabbed. If we are free here—free from the dominance of passion within and without—our own passions and other people's—free to discharge the Heaven-appointed duties, which our rights imply, which correspond with them and grow out of them, *then are we among the saved.* Then salvation sheds its light and pours its songs around.

The invasion of human rights is an assault upon human salvation. The oppressor is a destroyer. The constitution of man—the powers, prerogatives and prospects of man—his present and his eternal welfare, he sets at naught and tramples under foot. Whatever may be his condition and whatever his pretensions, this is his work. Whether he devour widows' houses or defraud the hireling of his wages, or hold in slavery the victims of legalized tyranny, he wages war with human salvation. He interferes with the discharge of Heaven-appointed duties, and does what he can to dry up the fountain of blessedness, which from the heart of these duties sends forth, pure and sparkling, its living waters. His success must be a triumph over human salvation.

To apologize for oppression under any of its varied forms, is to lend ourselves to the work of human destruction. A professed Christian, a religious teacher even, may permit errors, rank as dunghill weeds, to take root within him; the condition and the claims of the oppressed he may stupidly refuse to study; the crudest, falsest things he may put forth to stifle whatever of generous indignation or manly effort the ravages of tyranny may have provoked: he may deny to the oppressed their inalienable right to sympathy and assistance in the house of prayer; he may lend himself to revile and reproach and traduce the friends of holy Freedom: he may even make his religious profession or high station the occasion and the shield of his neglect of the claims of outraged humanity: but this he can not do

without inflicting deadly blows. He sets himself against that, in which salvation consists. He breaths a spirit, directly and vitally hostile to human welfare. Just so far as he has influence and power, just so far salvation bleeds and dies.

Now what is it for such an one, to put on the appearance of zeal and activity in the work of soul-saving? He affects to lament the depravity and wretchedness of his fellow-men. With a long face and in solemn tones, he discourses about their condition and prospects. He calls for special efforts for their benefit. He girds up his loins as if he were a-going to do something. Co-adjutors he enlists. And now what a scene of activity opens upon us. Assemblies are called. Meetings are held. Heaven and earth are invoked. What a stir! What expedients! What an agitation of the surface of the general sentiment! With what pretensions is the ear of simplicity and honesty wounded! "Sea and land are compassed to make proselytes." And they are made; drawn together, reckoned up and gloried over. Proselytes! To what? To saintship without humanity! To saintship, which refuses to plead the cause of the victims of prejudice and oppression! To saintship, which contributes more than every thing else to the protection and growth of the worst forms of rebellion against God and injury to man! Alas, what have we here! What! the very same vision, as painted the eye of Isaiah, the son of Amoz. What absurdities! A cold and cruel disregard of human rights, kindling up without losing a jot of its malignity, into a fervent regard for human salvation! Invitations to the weary, on lips laden with apologies for slavery! Such contradictions, Jehovah may well be weary of. They are too much for even *His* patience. Iniquity and a meeting, thus conjoined, must be a trouble to Him! Such glaring contradictions—such gross absurdities in His very presence! What else can this be than to make his house a den of thieves!

II. Such a meeting-holding activity as this discourse is designed to *expose*, is adapted, where human improvement and welfare are most vitally concerned, to confound things the most incongruous. Few things are as much insisted on in the Bible as a just discrimination among moral distinctions. Jeremiah on one occasion was greatly disheartened amidst the demands of his office. He knew not how to take another step. Amidst the disgusting forms of iniquity around him, his confidence in God was greatly impaired. He was ready, broken-hearted, to abandon his work. But what said the Lord? He encouraged him to enter anew upon his official course with fresh zeal and increased activity.—

He described the condition on which he might expect to speak with the authority of the God who sent him. "*If thou take forth the precious from the vile, thou shalt be as my mouth.*"* From a just discrimination among moral distinctions, his words would derive great weight and power.—This Jehovah regarded as all-essential to the success and fidelity of the prophet. In another connection, we are assured that divine influences develop and express themselves in making such distinctions clear and definite. "Then shall ye return and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth Him not."† The hypocrites around Him, the Savior once upbraided with a strange and hurtful negligence where just discrimination had a vital bearing upon their character. They were sharp-sighted enough where weather-signs were to be disposed of; but dull as lead where with a little attention, they could not but see clear indications of the presence of the Messiah. "Yea, and why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right?"‡

Whatever goes to confound moral distinctions, must be of harsh, if not of fatal, bearing upon character. The Law of Rectitude is the basis, to which, if good habits are to be formed and maintained, our temper and our activity must be conformed. Here is the model on which sound character is to be fashioned and matured. The more clearly and fully this model is presented, the higher will be its authority—the greater, its power—the more radical and transforming will be its influence upon the understanding, conscience and heart. Hence, under the dispensation of the Holy Spirit, proceed all healthful convictions—all well-directed endeavors—all sound reformation. Whatever goes to confound moral distinctions goes to obscure or misrepresent this model—to bereave it of its authority and neutralize its power. If confounded radically and vitally, the model disappears. No standard is left, by which moral character can be judged of. No ground remains, on which reformatory efforts can be made. As good and evil—right and wrong are confounded, the wicked cannot be convinced of their wickedness, nor the upright justified in their integrity. Indeed, the very significance of the words righteous and wicked has vanished. We are lost in a haze. We wander about without aim or object amidst endless confusions;—the spirit of every idle wind, of every hap-hazard impulse.

The positive institutions of religion were designed to subserve the end of moral distinctions. Hence they derive their meaning. Apart from this end, they are unintelligible and worthless. From this

they derive whatever sacredness we ascribe to them—become hallowed in the eyes of men. As hallowed things, they are commonly regarded. "The calling of assemblies—the solemn meeting"—with what reverence they are looked upon. The temple of the Lord, the pulpit, the communion table—all the arrangements and exercises of public worship—how holy they are generally esteemed! Here men expect to find the standard of Rectitude—the model of sound character.—And what if they find iniquity here excused, or countenanced, or justified? What if intemperance or oppression finds a refuge here? What if pride builds here a nest, and prejudice finds here a home? What if a worldly spirit and malignant passions riot and revel here? What if decisive measures to expose popular vices, to raise the depressed, to shelter the outcast, to relieve the oppressed, are discountenanced here—are pronounced impracticable and ridiculous? What if the earnest and determined advocates of freedom—of temperance—of an effective and comprehensive philanthropy, are here grossly misrepresented and spitefully traduced? And what if in the midst of all this, special efforts at saving souls are proposed. Special expedients are hit upon. Meetings are multiplied and protracted. Zeal flames up on every side. Large success in building up the church is boasted. Scores of converts flock around the communion table. And all this, while the iniquity characteristic of the meeting-holders is cherished and maintained! A few vague, general confessions are made as a thing of course. But eulogies* on wine-drinking remain unrevoked—arrangements† to tempt the vicious and increase intemperance stand firm—the‡ injured outcast is spurned as contemptuously as ever—church processes and decisions violative of the simplest principles of justice are not so much as called in question—and|| the cruel ex-

* EULOGIES ON WINE-DRINKING.—This allusion will be understood by those, upon whom a long paper was inflicted, first in the church and then in the presbytery, to show among other things, that the Saviour miraculously produced a large quantity of fermented wine at the wedding in Cana of Galilee, and left no small part of it behind him—doubtless for the benefit of the new married couple!

† To those who are familiar with the history of the Temperance reform in Whitesboro; and especially to those, who have exerted themselves to dry up those fountains of death among us, where intoxicating drink is sold, this must be painfully intelligible.

‡ You don't go to the negro-church and favor the negro-school, do you?

|| "I did say, that slaveholding was not in itself in all cases, and in its own nature, a sin. I hold the same opinion now, and I believe I shall always hold it, so long as my eyes and ears and intellect remain. In this I am happy to say I agree with the great mass of the most pious and intelligent Christians in America."—"I said that I did not consider the subject of slavery as coming within the bounds of the gospel, and that therefore the people need not expect to hear me discuss upon it."—"Though I should not preach upon it, I would myself, nor introduce any arguments for that purpose."—See Rev. David L. Ogden's Review, pp. 9, 10.

clusion of the cause of the oppressed from the pulpit passes unexposed, uncondemned. In one word, iniquity and the meeting move hand in hand! Thus things the most incongruous, and just there, where human improvement and welfare are most vitally concerned, are strangely confounded! How on such ground, can sound character be produced? How even understood?

And what must be the various bearing of all this! What, upon those, who amidst the general excitement are reckoned converts? Here is one who has all along been driving hard after the world—an eager, greedy earthling. He finds in the church, and among those who are active in extending its limits and controlling its movements, sordid worldliness; baptized indeed, but sordid worldliness still. Will he, thus contented, break friendship with the world, which he has long worshiped? Will the slave of artificiality—the victim of respect of persons, struggle to throw off his bonds on entering a community where such bonds are worn by way of ornament and held to be quite consistent with Christian liberty? Will the convert who had all along been a wine-bibber eschew the dangerous draughts beneath a pulpit whence issue enlogies on wine-drinking! Or will he who had been a slaveholder, who had sold his fellow-men and lived upon the price of blood, enter a church broken-hearted for his sin, where the sin of slavery is denied or palliated? In the midst of good earthlings, good rum-sellers, good wine-drinkers, good friends of slavery—in the midst of such odd combinations, such gross incongruities, such inexplicable confusion, what standard can be found by which sound character may be formed and matured? If these things are consistent with the Law of Rectitude—with Christian habits, the Law of Rectitude must be a loose affair—Christian habits must be any thing or nothing, adapting themselves to the humor or convenience of the thoughtless, the frivolous, the selfish. Amidst such incongruities, who can “take forth the precious from the vile”—who can distinguish between shadow and substance—between empty appearance and solid reality? Nothing has any proper existence—any specific character—any intelligible description. The church becomes a very Babel, where light and darkness—good and evil are blended together—where utter confusion of tongues baffles and defies the listening ear—the inquiring mind. Proselytes are thrown into a hot bed, where they are rapidly ripened for Hell. And the openly vicious can see no essential difference between themselves and the professed Christians around them. Such incongruities—can they be other than a trouble to Jehovah!

III. The thing, which this discourse aims to expose and condemn, moreover, *involves a perversion of the means of human salvation.*—The arrangements, usages, and institutions, which the prophet charged the Hebrews with profaning, were Heaven-appointed—God-given. The end to which they looked, was sublime and glorious.—In the midst of abounding iniquity—of widespread and fiery rebellion, they were designed to assert and support the divine authority. At the appointed feast, in the solemn meeting, the laws of the spiritual world in their application to the relations of the earth were to be defined, expounded, and insisted on. Here the will of God, enshrined in the active obedience, and commended by the sincere lips of His people, was to be continually held up as the model of character—the standard of action. Here, the prerogatives and requisitions of God—the rights and duties of man were to be presented in a clear and certain light in beautiful consistency and delightful harmony with each other. Piety God-ward was to animate philanthropy man-ward; and philanthropy was to nourish piety. The church was to be Heaven upon earth—transforming earth to heaven. All its influences, common and special—all its exertions, ordinary or extraordinary, were to look directly and effectively to the spread of inward purity expressed in outward morality. Such was the design of the positive institutions of Christianity.—Where this design has not been overlooked, these institutions have been what Heaven intended they should be, a blessing to mankind. They have greatly promoted human improvement and the general welfare. They have been the admitted source of the most substantial benefits. Without them, little has been effected or attempted to make man worthy of his relations and prospects. It is not to be wondered at, that they should be regarded with respect, little short of veneration;—that in the eyes of almost all, they should be invested with an air of sacredness. Wherever and whenever these institutions are held subservient to their proper ends, this feeling must be healthful—opening the way for good results.

But this feeling may be taken advantage of in making a meeting the home of iniquity. Bad men may seek a refuge in sacred places—doing evil under the cover of hallowed relations. They may, as they often do, assume the character and claim the honors of God’s anointed servants. Seizing on the high places of the church, they may affect zeal for its enlargement and prosperity. They suck her breasts of consolation—appropriate her honors and her revenues; why should they not deprecate with a jealous eye whatever might threaten to reduce her supplies and drive

her to leanness. From her strength and authority they derive their wealth and splendor. Why should they not labor to extend the one and increase the other? Hence their eagerness to call assemblies—to hold meetings—to multiply prayers—to employ church-increasing expedients.—Amidst these very things, they are cunningly busy in the work of iniquity. *That*, they never intermit, day or night. The very temple of Jehovah they convert into a bulwark of evil-doing. *Temperance-wise*, the church must not be urged to exert her powers.* She is too sacred to be spoken to. Off, ye profane; and let her quaff the cup of devils at the table of her Lord! The breath of rebuke from your uncircumcised lips would soil her white robes! *The negro-pew*—that hateful offspring of murderous prejudice, as mean as it is wicked—that consecrated monument of respect of persons—that cage of scorpions stinging souls to death; yon must not expose the absurdity and sin in which it had its origin. Though it is a toad, breathing venom into the ear of piety, you must not touch it with Ithuriel's spear. The devil thus incarnate must not be exposed, because forsooth he has obtruded himself upon the grounds of paradise! The negro-pew is one of the conditions on which alone well-bred souls can consent to be saved; and so, cunning, noisy quacks, in dispensing their balm of Gilead, give the negro-pew a place among their pious frauds. Nor must the church be urged in the name of God and bleeding humanity, to abandon its position in support of slavery, and to wield its God-given powers in behalf of the oppressed. Abraham it may have slandered, by calling him the patriarch of slaveholders; and under this character claiming a place in his bosom. The existence of slavery in the church, it may be affirmed, impairs neither the soundness of its faith nor the integrity of its character.† *Good intentions*, it may be maintained, may convert slave-

holding into a Christian virtue!‡ So that one may be under sacred obligations to violate the inalienable rights of his fellow-men! And to injure them at the most vital points for their special benefit! Such poison may have infected the very heart of the church; and quickened and strengthened a deadly hostility to the cause of holy Freedom:—may have made it a nuisance offensive to heaven and earth. Yet in any effort for its improvement and usefulness, you must not fix its eye upon the mortal sins, it refuses to repent of. *General confessions*, it may, in a general way, be exhorted to make. Thus all offense will be avoided. The tide of excitement may flow on. The church may be increased, while its old, fondled sins may be piously retained. The stream runs on smoothly. And the painful necessity of laboring to bring a pro-slavery church to repentance by preaching abolition lectures is cunningly avoided! §

Now for what purpose was the mission of the Son of God undertaken? And why was he called *Jesus*? The object of his mission and the occasion of his name we have in the aim He vigorously held—in the purpose He lovingly cherished, of “saving his people from their sins.” The Heaven-appointed, Heaven-honored means of grace, which in the cause of human salvation are to be employed, look of course in the same direction. A conversion, which leaves men at variance with the fundamental principles of a sound morality, leaves them unsaved. A defective morality is the natural offspring of a corrupt Christianity. If the former is defective at fundamental points, the latter is radically false and fatally corrupt. What must we say of a system of morality, which, in the very presence of slaveholding, connives at its enormities and even affects ignorance of its deadly tendencies? Which gives its countenance to the worst form, under which respect of persons and contempt for the poor ever haunted this specter-ridden world? Are men saved from their sins, who make no scruple of living in them? who ingeniously excuse or stoutly defend them? who curl their lips or gnash their teeth upon every one who dares honestly attempt to carry out the principles of the gospel to their most natural and significant applications? When a meeting is held to countenance and strengthen such a Christianity, it is held to countenance and strengthen iniquity; an effort is

* “Another absurd attempt to interfere with the eucharist was made at the State Temperance Society last week in Albany. Ground was taken against the use of fermented wine at the communion table, by a minister by the name of Van Buren, at the meeting held in the Baptist chapel in Pearl-street, on the evening of the 10th. The next day a resolution was offered, commending those churches that had introduced ‘the real juice of the vine,’ instead of the fermented compounds. The thing was warmly opposed by Dr. Potter and Dr. Welch, and after a spirited discussion was lost, 72 to 17—showing a great deal of good sense in the body. The temperance cause has before this received a blow by the interference of temperance conventions with the arrangements of churches; and we rejoice that in this case there was such an overwhelming amount of good sense to check the folly that would ruin any cause. There is great hope of the healthy progress of the cause under the control of such discreet members.”—N. Y. Baptist Register for Feb. 19, 1841.

† “The relation may still exist, *salva fide et salva ecclesia*—without violating the Christian faith or the church.”—Prof. Stuart's Reply to Dr. Fisk.

‡ The doctrine of good intentions—the old Jesuitical dogma, asserting that the end justifies the means, is of wide application—covering and sanctifying the whole field where transgression of the divine Law shows its face, and spits out its venom.

§ “And you would have me commence a protracted meeting, by delivering a course of abolition lectures!” “To be sure I would, if a pro-slavery church is to be brought to repentance.

made to convert bread to poison—to make the means of salvation a lure to despair.

IV. Such a meeting-holding activity as this discourse is occupied with, *involves an attempt to bring Jehovah into the service of Satan.*—Upon the positive institutions of Christianity, he has impressed the stamp of his authority. They are adapted, as they were designed, to support his authority—to subserve the ends of his government. They are dear to his heart as the fruit of his wisdom and goodness. They are known by his name. They are identified with his cause. Often has He been known greatly to honor them, making them the medium through which his choicest gifts were imparted. From their relation to Him, they derive all their sacredness. Thus, as arrangements established by his hand and for his glory, they are identified in the minds of his creatures with his government—with Himself. By virtue of this relation to heaven it is, that bad men are enabled to force them into the service of iniquity. With long faces, and solemn tones, and loud pretensions, they so practice their pious frauds as to deceive the simple and the unwary. Hear them. It is the cause of God we are intent on promoting. These special means we use at his bidding. In his name, we make accessions to his kingdom. For his sake, we ask the countenance and co-operation of all his friends. By the Cross, we expect to conquer. The influences of the Holy Spirit, we implore and enjoy. To stand aloof from our exertions is to deny the Savior. These professions are made and these claims set up, to give effect to the artifices by which they would secure favor and support for a corrupt Christianity. In the name of the Lord, they render service to the devil. On his altar, they burn their idol sacrifices. The arms which were designed to subdue his enemies, they level at his breast. Thus they strive to force Him into the service of Satan.

With indignation and surprise, voice after voice exclaims—What have we here? We thought that Jehovah was the avenger of the oppressed; that he had no respect of persons; that, according to his word, to identify ourselves with crushed humanity was the way to enjoy his favor. We understood that Jesus Christ had given general notice, that in the final day, He would make the most bruised and battered form of humanity a test of our regard for Him. And the Holy Spirit, we thought, impressed upon all the subjects of his regenerating power the image of the all-merciful One. But if what we here witness be indeed what it claims to be, the work of God—his hand must be strangely at variance with his lips. In what is here ascribed to the Holy Spirit we

see no indications of a power divine. And the effects do not imply the elements of a sound morality. Even those who were busy in producing these effects, whatever saintship they may claim, have never yet even aspired to the dignity of *men*. In a generous and magnanimous regard for our common nature, they fall short of the attainments of many a deist. What a puzzle! If God be true, this is not his work. Ah, my friends, God is true; whatever becomes of human artifices. He is not to be seduced or forced into a denial of Himself. And He regards with utter loathing the union of iniquity with a meeting.

How, then, are we to regard the positive institutions of religion? Very highly for their end's sake. The holy Sabbath; the Christian temple; the sacred ministry; the communion table; the conference and prayer meeting; the pastoral walk—precious, all precious, for their happy bearings and healthful tendencies, in their relation to moral character. This gives them high importance—deep significance. With this constantly in view, we can hardly overrate them. Glad shall we be when they say, Let us go up to the house of the Lord. For his work's sake, we shall highly esteem the Christian minister. To the disciples of the Savior, we shall join ourselves in an everlasting covenant. The communion of saints, we shall earnestly seek at the sacramental supper. In our efforts to lead the heavy laden to the great source of rest, we shall be instant in season and out of season. On ordinary occasions and occasional extraordinary, we shall not forsake the assembling of ourselves together. Fearing the Lord, we shall often speak to each other—stirring up each other's minds in the way of a grateful remembrance of what heaven forbids us to forget. Thus shall we seek light, and strength, and encouragement, in discharging our heaven-appointed duties. The frames, and feelings, and impulses, which bear us onward in the way of practical obedience, we shall prize for their healthful tendencies and happy effects. Thus the positive in religion will become for us the handmaid of the moral in religion. The excitement which melts our hearts will strengthen our hands. Our reverence for the Creator will be accompanied with respect for his creatures. Charity towards his children will flow from love to the Father. Our regard for his authority will be coupled with respect for their rights. Our delight in his blessedness will be joined with exertions for their welfare. What we approve in preaching we shall embody in practice. A meeting-holding activity will be followed by a duty-doing activity.

To divorce the positive from the moral in religion is to destroy both. The moral will be neg-

lected if the positive is despised; and the positive must be insignificant if the moral is overlooked. If the end is forgotten the means are worthless; if the means are neglected the end is lost. Doing without saying, is a blind activity; saying without doing, is an empty sound. A proper regard for one will lead us to insist upon both. Give them tongues, and with one voice they would exclaim, United we stand, divided we fall.

A meeting-holding activity accompanied with a disregard for the claims of humanity, we ought to eschew for its hurtfulness and abhor for its wickedness. Just so far as we give it countenance we pervert the right ways of the Lord. We subscribe to the glaring lie, that on the ground where humanity withers, religion may flourish; that hearts dead to the claims of man may be alive to the requisitions of God!

How is it, that we hear of revivals of religion among the monuments of slavery? of successful evangelists among anti-abolitionists? of a fervent zeal with a lax morality? The excitement begins, goes on, and ends; the tide rises, swells, and ebbs, and leaves worldliness, and respect of persons, and alliance with oppression, and a league with intemperance, and contempt for the poor, and a compromise with popular follies, and party spirit, and sectarian zeal, and a spiteful opposition to all who sigh and cry on account of prevailing abominations. These things, and such as these, in the old church and the new proselytes, it leaves where it found them, unrebuked, unassailed; in full vigor and activity. No direct, earnest, and decisive reformatory efforts are here made, lest the excitement should be reduced! To expose and assail prevailing forms of sin would be prejudicial to the revival; would divert the attention of awakened souls from the one thing needful! And so men are to be reconciled to God with their eye averted from the very point where their rebellion burns most fiercely! and to be reformed, without attention to the particulars where their violations of the law are most flagrant! Theatrical expedients are employed and a theatrical effect is produced! Realities are exchanged for romance. A great noise is made about iniquity, and repentance, and giving the heart to God, and being engaged in religion; but the sober realities which are involved in sinning, and turning to the Lord, are avoided, lest revival sermons should sink into abolition lectures, or temperance addresses, or expositions of the seventh commandment, or commentaries on respect of persons, or charges to the rich to distribute, and to the proud not to be high-minded, or attacks upon the settled order of things and the established usages of society! And so the revival does up its work with-

out touching the strong-holds in which Satan is intrenched! What objection can *he* have to such revivals? The more frequent they are, and the longer they continue, the more firmly is his throne established. Men may weep or laugh, be merry or sad, wear long faces or short faces, make long prayers, or swear long oaths, go to the church or go to the brothel, profess religion or profess atheism, preach or prate, it is all one to him, while they leave him unmolested, to multiply his murders. They may even hang him in effigy, if they will keep their hands from his person. They may, without offense to him, have as much religion as they please, provided they will keep it in what he calls its place—safely closeted with their Sunday clothes; apart from the actual relations and ordinary business of life; where it may muse and meditate, sing psalms and pray prayers, without being annoyed by the dust of the market, the din of the exchange, the wrangling and contending by which the ballot-box is beset. His most efficient votaries have a religion of this sort; and can on suitable occasions bestir themselves to multiply proselytes. They may be zealous for God at the protracted meeting, provided always, that they are zealous for the devil, too, in bargain-making and negro-laundering; in clinging to parties pledged to the support of slavery, and in opposing decisive measures to promote the cause of temperance. Whoever combines iniquity with a meeting may reckon on the countenance and co-operation of the devil.

But, my brethren, will you lend *yours*? Can you thus renounce your principles, and forget your vows, and dishonor your Savior, and trample on your Bibles, and turn to mockery the sacred things of heaven? Can you thus enter into a league with iniquity—a covenant with death? Heaven forbid! "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever ye sow, that must ye also reap." He is a *templer*, who, under religious pretences, would betray you into inconsistencies at war with the principles which heaven requires you to honor. Here, especially, perils beset you. Never is the devil so dangerous, as when with scripture on his lips, he approaches us as an angel of light. Let us beware of his devices. Let us in a law-abiding way exert ourselves to build up the heavenly kingdom, that God may smile upon us; that Christ may own and guide us; that the Holy Spirit may refresh us with his life-giving influences!

WILLIAM GOODELL, Editor and Publisher,

Honeoye, Ontario county, N. Y.

E. SHEPARD, PRINTER, Rochester, N. Y.

From the Christian Investigator, for March, 1844.

REFORMATION TRACTS.—To meet the growing wants of the brethren engaged in the new enterprise of church reformation, we propose to publish from time to time, and as there may be a demand for them, a series of *cheap tracts* for distribution by the friends of the cause. The Anti-Slavery enterprise itself, to look no further, requires tracts upon the religious and ecclesiastical bearings of that subject, which the *political* Anti-Slavery associations can hardly be expected to furnish. The whole subject of church discipline, church order, and ecclesiastical authority requires, for Anti-Slavery purposes as well as for the intrinsic importance of those subjects, to be fully spread out before the religious community, in a manner which none of the present religious denominations can be expected to do.

Beyond and above all this, the claims of a truly *spiritual and living Christianity*, alike Scriptural and rational, practical and evangelical, require to be set forth in earnest and *direct appeals to individuals*, professors of religion and others, and a *personal religion* urged upon each and upon all, that, when lovingly embraced, shall be adequate to the social wants of man on the earth, the regeneration of human *society*, as well as the felicity of the individual in a future state—so that the *divine will may be done on earth, as it is done in heaven*. The lamentable defects of religious teaching and of religious literature, in this direction, are beginning to be extensively *felt* as well as detected. Some little beginning we may hope to make in this comparatively unoccupied field. And no department of ethical, philanthropic, or reformatory inquiry should be deemed foreign to the plan of such a series of tracts, if the enterprise of publishing them be adequately sustained.

We begin the series of tracts, by a re-publication of President Green's discourse, "INICUITY AND A MEETING." Our second tract will bear the title, "ARE YOU A CHRISTIAN?"

D'AUBIGNE'S PROTESTANT REFORMATION.—We are delighted to find this truly invaluable work so extensively and eagerly read. It is now to be had, complete in 462 pages, at the low price of *fifty cents*, of SAGE & BROTHER, ROCHESTER.* Every friend of church reform should have a copy. It abounds in facts and principles of the highest importance at the present time. The good providence of God is manifest in the wide diffusion of such a work at such a crisis.

* Sold also by Saxon & Miles, New York; James M. Campbell, (publisher,) Philadelphia; Robinson & Jones, Cincinnati, &c.

THE CHRISTIAN INVESTIGATOR, is published monthly, by WILLIAM GOODSELL, Honeoye, Ontario Co., N. Y. Price 50 cts. per annum.

From the Christian Investigator.

PARAPHRASE OF THE FIRST PSALM.

Blest is the man that counsels not,
Nor walks with godless men;
Nor bends his steps, nor shapes his course,
To plans of selfish gain.

With earth-born maxims, aims and ends
He holds no compromise,
Upward his steady foot ascends,
Nor turns aside to lies.

The sinner's way he hastes to quit,
He stands not where they stand;
He sits not down where scorers sit,
Nor takes them by the hand.

But his delight is in the law—
The law of God, most high,
In this all day, he meditates,
For this at night doth sigh.

He shall be planted like a tree
Where living waters flow,
His leaf forever green shall be,
Nor drought nor winter know.

His moisten'd foot shall pierce the soil,
And fix'd, like God, abide,
And timely fruit reward his toil,
Whatever else betide.

Whate'er he doth shall prosper still,
He doth what God commands,
He wills but what his Maker wills,
Like God's—his counsel stands.

Oh! how unlike the worldly wise!
Th' ungodly are not so:—
Driv'n like the chaff of summer skies,
By all the winds that blow.

Expediency their only guide,
Expedients all their trust,
When these are wreck'd, they've nought beside,
And perish sure they must.

In judgment, therefore, with the just,
The wicked shall not stand,
Their names are written in the dust,
They build upon the sand.

For God doth know the righteous men,
That walk the narrow way;
But those that count his guidance vain,
From their own mercies stray.

REFORMATION TRACTS.

TRACT No. 1. *Iniquity and a Meeting*, by President Green—3 pages, for sale at \$1.00 per hundred, for ready cash only. Orders to be addressed to Wm. Goodsell, Honeoye, Ontario co., N. Y., or to E. Shepard, Printer, Rochester; or J. Mosher, Canandaigua.